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**By Edna M. Otis**



Their Yesterdays: ✓

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AuSable and Ozroda, nich.

1848--1948



By Edna M. Otis

Edna M. Otis

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## Foreword

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If you lived in Iosco county in "the halcyon days when Pine was king," you have a wealth of memories. Life was not so complex then, as now; pleasures were derived from simple things; friendships were formed that time cannot break, nor can distance weaken the links.

Come with me, then, and re-live Yesterday, as you read these few chapters that deal with the AuSable-Oscoda community.

And as you read, each spring-time will awaken a nostalgic yearning to trek again woodland paths in search of the trailing arbutus.

Summer suns will recall cool lake breezes, and south winds sighing gently in mighty pine trees.

Mother Nature will spill her paint pots in autumn, and you will realize that you cannot describe in adjectives the riot of colors in the North woods. Or, mayhap, storm clouds will gather, and you will recall fierce gales of other years, when shipping craft were compelled to scud before them,

and seek shelter in friendly harbors.

And in the winter time, even though "shut in from all the world without," you found happiness by making it, and in "work well done, and unwasted days," the cycle was completed.

Year after year, until a half-century of time had rolled away, and the forests were denuded of pine, "sawdust days" were enacted in the AuSable-Oscoda community. If, however, yester-years were drab, as youth today often says, and if the soft and lovely tints in which we clothe them are the result of looking through rose-colored glasses, then we hope that you who read this collection of historical facts and homespun incidents, will find in them what we have found in them—remembrances of friends—"dear friends of long ago, now scattered where the four winds blow," but who "are as of old to me—deep-carved in memory."

—Edna M. Otis

Original in U. S. Nat. Arch. 2114





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"Ye say that all have passed away, that noble band and brave,  
That their light canoes have vanished from off the crested wave:  
That 'mid the forests where they roamed there rings no  
    hunter's shout—  
But their name is on your waters, ye may not wash it out."



## The Indians

For an interesting study of the American Indian, take the Indians of Iosco. They belong to the Saginaw band of the Chippewa tribe. Their forefathers loved the winding beauty of the AuSable River (to them the Ke-no-te-gon Se-bing), in much the same manner as does the white man of today. According to tradition, the ancestors of the remnant tribe in Iosco, were stalking noble game along the AuSable, when Columbus discovered America.

The Rev. John Tadgasong, for many years pastor of the Baptist church on the Iosco-Alcona county line, was quoted in an issue of the AuSable Saturday night, in January, 1888, as saying that his forefathers had lived between the Indian Islands on the AuSable River and the Pine River for four hundred years.

The Indians held undisputed possession of this region until 1819, when, by the terms of the Saginaw Treaty, they ceded their lands to the United States government. Eight thousand acres were reserved along the north and east bank of the AuSable—not that they might till the soil, for the land was poor; but that they might enjoy the AuSable River region, and command the highway of its waters. They hunted and fished and trapped at pleasure. But the white man's hunger for land remained unsatisfied, and within a few years time this reservation, also, was ceded to the government. True, the government faithfully promised to pay "one thousand dollars, annually, in silver, FOREVER," to these dusky people for their lands, but long ago the payments ceased, and "we broke of faith the seal."

It may be that the Indians got the sand of the AuSable River region into their moccasins and could not get it out again, (the reason given by vacationists for coming here annually), for they

hunted and trapped in the section for years, long after all lands had been ceded to the government. But the forests soon re-echoed to the sound of the woodman's axe. One could roam the woods at will no more.

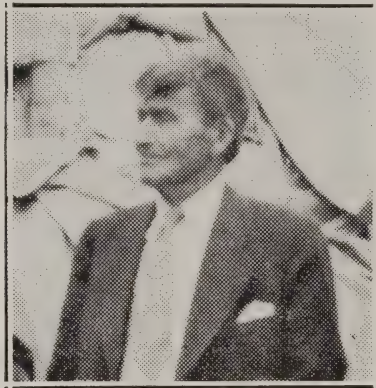
Two Indian families took up homesteads on the flats of Van Etan Lake, hoping that civilization would pass them by. It did not, for when the logs belonging to Pack, Woods & Co., Oscoda lumbermen 75 years ago, came down the Pine River, it was necessary to flood the flats to keep the logs moving. The plight of these Indian families each spring was pitiable. This moved the lumbering firm to make an exchange of lands with the Indians, giving them property on the Iosco-Alcona county line for their holdings on the flats, and thus the settlement north of Oscoda had its beginning.

Evidences of Indian habitation were found frequently by early white residents. Excavations on the north side of the AuSable River showed the site of an Indian burying ground. When the Consumers Power Company was building Cooke Dam, an island in the river was flooded, and this, too, was an Indian burial place, but no Indian for the past fifty years can remember when it was used for such a purpose. The old Saginaw to Mackinaw trail of the Indians is not entirely obliterated, in the region of Cooke Dam. Government surveyors more than a century ago marked Iargo Springs, on the AuSable River, learning the name from the Indians themselves. Here, seven crystal springs, arranged in fan shape, bubble from the winding bank to feed the river below. Iargo means "many waters."

The Indian mission church dates from 1878. Its founding was due to a missionary program of the Methodist church at AuSable-Oscoda. It is located on the Iosco-Alcona county line. The Chippewa burial ground is close by. The late Rev. Simon Greensky was pastor of this church for about 35 years.

Hunting, fishing, picking the wild berries in season, and farming indifferently, occupy the time of the Indians at the settlement. Also, they practice their old art of basket-making, and their finished product finds ready sale. If one seeks to learn secrets of the forest from them by inquiring as

to the methods used in obtaining the brilliant colorings of the baskets, one is disappointed; for the Indians of Iosco have become up-to-date. To secure the results that berries and leaves and barks formerly produced, the Indian today uses modern dyes.



Rev. Simon Greensky, Indian Pastor for a Third of a Century

## To a Bark Canoe:

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"And the forest's life was in it,  
All its mystery and magic,  
All the lightness of the birch tree,  
All the toughness of the cedar,  
All the larch's supple sinews,  
And it floated on the water  
Like a yellow leaf in autumn,  
Like a yellow water lily."



## Louis Chevalier and the Fur Trade

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In the files of the United States Land Office in Washington, D. C., is a record proving that in the year 1823, Louis Chevalier entered a claim for land situated on the Rivier Aux Sables, or Sandy River; but history has not recorded the story of Louis Chevalier's stay in what is now known as Iosco county.

The affidavits supporting Chevalier's claim for land, state that he occupied, improved and cultivated the same during the year 1812, and the deponents verily believed that Chevalier had possession of the land as early as 1800, and occupied it from 1800 to 1812.

Although Chevalier made his claim in 1823, twenty years elapsed before he was issued a patent therefor in 1843. His "ribbon farm" was three miles long and a half-mile in width.

The title to the land was transferred several times, and finally came into possession of the Campaus of Detroit, rich fur traders of Michigan. In 1867, the Chevalier claim was conveyed to Henry M. Loud. When Mr. Loud and party made their initial trip to the region in 1866, the ruins of Chevalier's log house were still visible on the banks of the river near where the Wigwam (the public hall in AuSable) was located for so many years.

Well may we ask, Who was Louis Chevalier? A French fur trader? A *coureurs de bois*? Without a doubt, Yes. Here are the reasons for our deductions: He lived in close proximity to large settlements of Indians on the AuSable and Pine Rivers. History has not recorded a trading post in that vicinity under either the French or British regimes, which fact leaves one to conjecture that the place was a fertile field for the fur trader. Only a trader long in the service and well ac-

quainted with the Indians would have braved the dangers of the forest and established a post at such a point. The French were peculiarly adapted to trading with the Indians. They were ready at all times to participate in the feasts, sports and dances of their Indian friends. In this respect their attitude was in sharp contrast with the Englishman, who held aloof and disdained a seeming friendliness for the red man. The French traders and voyageurs were ever at home in the wigwam.

When Louis Chevalier left the AuSable River region, we know not. It may be that loneliness prompted him to seek a residence elsewhere, but we doubt it. The American Fur Company, chartered in 1808, rapidly gained control of the fur trade, and in an effort to supplant the independent traders, sought first to engage them as the Company's representative. Failing to do this, the Company established a rival post close by, and a relentless, competitive war was carried on. In the end the American Fur Company always won out. We incline to the belief that it was the keen competition of the American Fur Company, coupled with old age, that led Louis Chevalier to retire from the fur trader's life, and to make his home in Chicago. The years must have weighed heavily, else he would not have deeded his estate to relatives, with the proviso that they care for him the remainder of his life. His death is unrecorded, so far as we know.

The war of 1812 had interfered seriously with the expansion of the American Fur Company, but with the close of the war the trade developed rapidly. Posts were established at important points, and in 1828 the Williams Brothers of Owosso, who took charge of a post at Saginaw, established an outpost at AuSable.

For twelve years the American Fur Company maintained their post at AuSable. The Company withdrew from the region when the source of supply of the fur

trade dwindled by reason of extermination. The Indians themselves, for the most part, left the AuSable River region soon afterwards. Deprived of the lands of their fathers, changed modes of living, disease—all had their effect upon the Indian. The race

was “disappearing like the melting snow on the hills.”

The wild, free life in Iosco was over when the fleet of fur-trading canoes had stopped at AuSable for its last cargo, and was southward bound on its last trip.

“We sing of the days that are gone,  
And the memory of the dead.”



## The First Settlement and the Fishing Industry

The first settlement in Iosco county was made at the mouth of the AuSable River, and is credited to fishermen. Two families—those of George Hulett Duell and Horace D. Stockman—came to the AuSable River region in September, 1848, and spent the following winter there. They lived together in a shanty, near where the O'Toole Block was built a few years later. Both men had fished at Thunder Bay for several years. Duell came originally from New York State, and Stockman from Ohio. Both men, too, were among the seven original purchasers of land when the area was surveyed.

James O. Whittemore of Tawas City, first editor of The Iosco County Gazette, in an historical sketch of Iosco county in the first issue of the paper in September, 1868, writes that some time previous to 1848, Curtis Emerson of East Saginaw, and James Eldridge, located land at the mouth of the AuSable River, on both sides of it; and that Captain Benjamin F. Pierce of Bay City had a trading post on the bank of the river, which formed the landmark from which, in 1849, lots were set off and offered for sale.

The original purchasers, according to Mr. Whittemore, were Benjamin F. Pierce, W. L. P. Little, James E. Smith, Enoch Olmstead, Hulett Duell, Patrick Perrott and Horace D. Stockman. Of the seven men, three became pioneer residents of the county—Messrs. Pierce, Duell and Stockman, the two latter living here until their deaths.

Another of the early fishermen was Jesse Muncey, who, in 1851, joined his two sons at AuSable, where they were engaged in fishing and trading. Jesse Muncey had been a resident of "the shore" for more than a decade, when he decided to make his home in Iosco county. He was the first keeper

of the lighthouse at Thunder Bay Island, which was built a short time prior to 1840.

The fishing village of AuSable in 1852 comprised a few fishermen's huts and an old Indian log house, according to Jesse Muncey, jr., who was a boy thirteen years of age at that time. A narrow strip along the bank of the river was free from brush and trees, but back of that the ground was covered with brush and jack pines. The banks of the river were very high, and the channel was narrow.

Five years later, or in 1857, there were few changes for civic betterment in the place. There were fish houses on either side of the river, and the reels for stretching the nets. The transient visitor was accommodated at either the home of Capt. Terry or of B. F. Pierce, which homes became impromptu hotels as the occasion demanded. It was not until 1865 that a frame house was erected, Elijah Grandy being the owner of it.

It would be difficult, indeed, to name all who came to this region in the years between 1848 and 1865—when the principal occupation of the inhabitants was fishing, and the standard of trade was fish. However, we name a few of these early pioneers: William Daggett, Benjamin Bowker, Elijah Grandy, who became the first postmaster, and Felix O'Toole. Mr. Bowker first came to AuSable in 1852. Until 1859, he worked in Flint during the winter time, and spent the summers in AuSable, where he worked at coopering, making fish barrels. The following year, 1860, after locating permanently in AuSable, he was married to Miss Hannah Armstrong, the ceremony being performed by Horace Stockman, justice of the peace. This was one of the earliest marriages (if not the first) on record in the county.

Still others who came at an early date, remained, and entered into the life of the fishing village are noted herewith:

Augustus Stall, who in 1862,

kept the first hotel—the Exchange, located on River street, about where the National Hotel was located at a later date. He was one of the two supervisors of the county in 1863 and the chairman of the Board.

W. D. Horton spent the summer of 1850 in AuSable and kept a boarding house. He left the region later, but returned to the settlement in 1864, took up farming, and became one of the early sheriffs of the county.

Patrick Murphy was attracted to AuSable in 1849, by the fishing industry. In later years he engaged in the grocery business. He represented the township of AuSable on the Board of Supervisors in 1862.

John Earl was also an early resident, of whose history but little is known aside from the fact that he was a voter in AuSable in 1857, and elected justice of the peace at the first election. In 1861 he served on the Board of Supervisors. He responded to the call of the colors in Civil War Days, and died in service.

James McGerriety first came to AuSable in 1855. He later left this section but returned in 1861. He was first engaged in fishing, but later entered the hotel business. He served the county as treasurer in 1863, giving a bond in the sum of \$3,000.00. He served as sheriff of the county in 1869 and 1870. His death occurred at AuSable in 1874.

James McCoy, a fisherman, and John C. MacDonald sought AuSable in 1865. The latter came to see the country. At first he worked in the woods; later he took logging contracts. Finally he entered the saloon business.

James K. Forrest resided in AuSable from 1863 until the time of his death in 1891. For eleven years after his arrival on "the shore" he was engaged in the business of fishing and the manufacture of fish oil.

Of the fishing industry in AuSable in the early days, we quote

liberally from an historical sketch of the county written by James O. Whittemore, and printed in Vol. 1, No. 1, of the Iosco County Gazette, under date of September 24, 1868:

"The white fish and trout fisheries off the mouth of the AuSable River, constituted the main business of the town of AuSable for many years. Many thousand barrels were taken, which found a ready market in the southern states, through Cleveland, Sandusky and Cincinnati, Ohio. The capture of these required a large fleet of sailcraft, and the curing and packing gave employment to many coopers and other hands. Thousands of barrels of salt were required, and thousands of dollars worth of nets and fishing apparatus, as well as large supplies of provisions and clothing for the men. The furnishing of these laid the foundation of the fortunes of Felix O'Toole.

"In the fishing season, it was a splendid sight to see a fleet of fifty sail emerging from the mouth of the river and spread their wings to the off-land breeze of the morning—widening out their column as they advanced, they soon receded and were lost to sight below the horizon. All day, and sometimes late into the night, they would be absent; sometimes in calm and shine; and oftener in heavy seas and storms of rain and snow—many times would they come in at midnight, cased in ice, formed by the seas which swept over the deeply laden boats. But though exposed to toil and hardship, it was all taken with a light heart and the nights were vocal with songs and jests from the returning fleet. The New England fisheries are often called the nursery of our navy—but the AuSable fisherman can handle his little craft with a skill and daring and fearless grace, that Cape Ann or New Bedford cannot excel. He delights in storm and danger, and the winter storms of Lake Huron are as dangerous with their heavy

cross seas, as any on the Atlantic. This wild, free reckless life is full of poetry and excitement—it carries us back to the days of Vikings and the Danish rovers of the North Sea, to whom song and mirth and diasons of ale were of more prize than the spelling book and the peaceful arts of civilization.”

The fishing business gave way to the lumber industry in AuSable in 1865; or, as Mr. Whittemore says, “The age of poetry fled into the night of tradition, and the prosaic, modern era came in with the first shipment of machinery for the saw mill of Messrs. Backus Brothers, the pioneers in the lumber business of AuSable”.

The outstanding character in AuSable in the fishing days was Felix O'Toole, of whom it might be said he was the “king de facto” of the fishing village. A shoe-maker in Detroit, he took his winter's wages in shoes and visited the AuSable region to dispose of his stock to the fishermen. From this beginning in 1860, he gradually expanded his operations until he was owning a fleet of fishing boats and employing men to run them and fish for him; conducting a merchantile business; engaging in the real estate game; and taking a civic pride in the community by erecting a fine business block.

When the fishing hamlet had become a thriving village, and later a city humming with the activities of the sawmills, it boasted O'Toole Avenue, whereon was located the O'Toole Block with three business halls on the first floor, two of which were occupied in 1868 by Mr. O'Toole with merchandise, and the third by James McGarrity as a billiard room.. Here, also, was O'Toole's Hall, the community center of the town for many years, as well as the Masonic lodge rooms. The block was, in 1868, one of the most conspicuous ornaments of the village.

Mr. O'Toole was a bachelor. It is said of him that “he always dressed like a king, and bristled from head to foot with executive

ability. Commands fell from his lips like cracks from a whip, and everybody was glad to ‘fly to the cat-hole.’”

He had many proteges among the young men of the village, one of whom taught his benefactor to read and write. At the time, Mr. O'Toole was about 60 years of age.

Dominant in the life of the man were his courage and his generosity. At times the demand for fish was great, prices were high, and the business was exceedingly profitable. At other times, prices would sink to the very lowest mark, inspection would then be unusually severe, and the profits would be on the minus side of the ledger. These latter times, showed Mr. O'Toole's qualities. James O. Whittemore says of him:

“Mr. O'Toole often made large advances to fishermen in the early fall, and supplied them with provisions and clothing for themselves and men during the fishing season. Often at the close of the season, in December, if ‘luck’ had been poor, the whole catch of many boats would not repay these advances, and yet they and their families were there shut in for a long winter, with no employment or means. At such times, Mr. O'Toole's courage and generosity never failed. He was ready to carry them and their families through the winter, relying on their honor for repayment another season. And to the credit of these fearless ‘toilers of the sea,’ be it known, that hardly ever did they prove themselves unworthy of this confidence.”

We boast of our civilization these days, and rightly so; yet during the fishing era in AuSable, theft was looked upon in the village as the meanest crime in the calendar, and it was neither tolerated nor attempted. Down through the years comes the story of how fire once broke out near the O'Toole store, at a time when Mr. O'Toole was absent in Detroit. Unable to extinguish the fire readily, the volunteer fighters began



to remove to places of safety all movable property that was in the path of the flames. Merchandise from the O'Toole store was thus saved, as well as furnishings from the room above the store where the proprietor slept. Thus it was that in uncovering a keg from under the bed, a large amount of money was revealed. It had been promiscuously deposited therein. The keg was without lock or mysterious combination, and yet the money was safe. The room in which it had thus lain, was open to anyone who wished to enter. The story goes that men did enter it frequently—to get something out of a barrel.

Tradition says that at times as much as \$100,000.00 would be left by Mr. O'Toole in this unprotected manner, while he was absent in different cities to purchase boats, nets or needed supplies; but it was never touched by the rough men of the community. They may have lacked polish and culture, but they were honest, and faithful to an employer.

When "the prosaic, modern era" had fully come, when the fishing industry began to wane, and the conversation of men was of white pine instead of fish, Felix O'Toole left the region where he had amassed his wealth. He went west with the family of Charles Warner, an early postmaster. In 1883 he was living at Albany, Oregon. When death claimed him a few years later he still possessed a goodly share of this world's goods. To the Warner family he left his fortune, with the exception of \$5.00 that was a bequest to Felix O'Toole, Ireland. Who the latter was, is not known.

To note that AuSable was the rendezvous for rough characters in both the fishing and the lumbering periods, is to make but a statement of fact. The refining influences of schools and churches were not appreciated in the early days—by the men, at least, and the men ruled. Two articles satisfied them—fish and whiskey. Fish were

essential because they could purchase all of the necessities of life—and the whiskey, as well.

Mrs. Sarah R. Tuttle, wife of the first resident circuit judge of the Twenty-third Judicial Circuit, accompanied her husband on his initial trip up the shore in 1864. Her impression of AuSable at that time was a vivid remembrance of the scene as they stopped at the fishing village. There was no dock, but small boats lightered out to meet the boat from the south, with its cargo of freight, and supplies for the fishermen. Fish was the medium of trade, and women tossed them up on the deck of the vessel, to receive beef-steak in exchange therefore. Men tossed up fish, also, but in practically every instance they were bartering them for whiskey.

The first record of a school in AuSable was in 1864, when a Mrs. Hor, filled with pity and compassion for the children of the settlement, gave them instruction in a private house.

It was doubtless the missionary work of this good woman that awakened the conscience of the fishermen and others to the need of an organized school, for the following year (1865) the first schoolhouse was built. On stormy days the fishermen helped in its construction. It lacked architectural beauty, being, indeed, a primitive affair, with boards nailed upside down. It was not, however, a low structure, but was built high enough so that Horace Stockman, the tallest man in the region, might stand upright in it without bumping his head.

Religion did not fare so favorably as did education. Handed down from generation to generation are two stories of attempts to bring the gospel of salvation to the fisher-folk of AuSable. Probably the stories have lost nothing in their re-telling, but the annals of AuSable and Oscoda would be incomplete if they were not recorded.

From a history of the Methodist



church of the community, prepared with much care in 1878—a church that both financially and numerically was rated the strongest in Iosco county in the lumbering period, and the edifice the finest in the region—is gleaned the following story of how an inducement was made to have the people worship and serve God in the early 1860's:

The Detroit Methodist Conference had sent Rev. J. P. Merchant to do missionary work along the Huron shore. He located at Harrisville, where he taught school week days, preached on Sunday, and with the aid of his good wife Martha did a wonderful work for the Master. The organization of the Methodist church at Harrisville was the outcome of their efforts. His first visit to AuSable was in 1861, where he held a service in a private home. How long he continued to visit AuSable, no one knows. He was a typical itinerant preacher, walking the distance between his charges. Since the fishing settlement at AuSable was on the south side of the river, it became his custom to walk to the north bank, and halloo to some one to row him across. When the service was over, he would secure the aid of a boatman to take him again across the river, and he would return to Harrisville as he came to AuSable—afoot. Of his ministry in AuSable, there are none to tell the story, except to give an account of his last trip.

Arriving as usual one Sabbath morning, he called as before for a boatman. His call was unheeded. Then a party of men appeared on the opposite bank—men who had been drinking of the cup that cheered (for a time) and inebriated, as well. They answered his call for a boat by the advice to "swim across," if he wanted to join them. Finally one man, not so hard-hearted as the rest, rowed him across. Rev. Merchant preached to the "faithful few," and was rowed back. But with his departure he "shook off the dust from

his feet" against the ungodly community, and never again visited it.

Undaunted by the treatment accorded Rev. Merchant, other missionaries later visited the region. Perhaps the following story had to do with one of them:

A room at the old Exchange Hotel had been secured for the purpose of holding a religious meeting therein. Now public gatherings were few in AuSable in those days, but when one was arranged for, everyone attended. This accounts for the men, women and children of the fishing village turning out en masse to listen to the missionary, who pleaded with them to contribute towards the erection of a suitable place of worship, and the support of a minister. An eloquent preacher was the missionary, but not for long was he allowed to speak. Up rose a fisherman—a man with all the qualities of leadership—a man who had looked long on and drank deeply of the wine when it was red—and inquired as to the whyness of all the excitement. In a few short sentences, devoid of fine phrases, he made it known that the room in which they were gathered had never been used for any purpose other than dancing. Why should a stranger be allowed to come in and usurp their rights? He called for the town fiddler to strike up a tune. There is no need to stretch the imagination; in fancy we can hear the stentorian voice ringing out: "Get your partners for a quadrille." The would-be church service became a dancing party, as the room was cleared of benches and chairs. The missionary left to seek a better and a broader field.

The rest of the story is soon told. To adequately compensate the good man for his self-sacrifices, his expenses were paid—in fish. Each fisherman, to make sure that his neighbor contributed his just share of this expense, appropriated a barrel of the said neighbor's fish—and when the preacher left the village he carried away with

him a whole boatload of fish as an expression of the good will of the inhabitants.

Although the efforts of the missionaries among the fishermen seemed to have no visible results at the time, yet we can be certain that some of the good seed sowed fell on fertile ground. In 1867, about two years after the Loud lumbering firm first visited AuSable, a church was built, and the townsfolk flocked to the house of God to listen to the gospel of love and truth and purity.

A century of time has passed since the era of the fishing industry opened in AuSable. Improved equipment, better methods of marketing, and higher prices, but a dwindling source of supply, are noted as time's changes in the industry. Whereas gill nets were made by hand in the early days, and formed the winter's work of the fishermen, modern ways of manufacture have supplanted the laborious task of yester-years.

In the methods of marketing fish, the greatest changes have been made. Whitefish and trout, salted; and later, herring preserved in the same manner, were shipped to Cincinnati and other Ohio cities for many years. Pickerel found a ready sale in New York and Chicago. Until the early '80's the only method of transportation from Iosco county was by boat. In more recent years, shipments have been made by railroad. The fish are packed in ice, in wooden boxes, fifty pounds of fish in a box, and they reach the city fish markets in good condition in a comparatively few hours after packing. The last word in marketing, however, is shipping by motor trucks. This means of reaching the consumer is used mostly in the inland cities of Michigan, and applies to the sale of herring in the season when the "catch" is heavy.

The sale of fish locally has increased to a marked degree in recent years, due, without a doubt,

to the rapidly developing tourist and resort business.

Unlike the farmer, the fisherman is assured a ready market for the results of his labors. Prices may vary, but there is always a demand. One early-day fisherman recalls that his father, at one time, received only one-fourth of a cent per pound for pickerel; yet he, himself, has been paid as high as 40 cents per pound for the same kind of fish.

In 1876, there was a record lift of fourteen tons of pickerel off Iosco's shore line. The price paid at that time was two and one-half cents per pound—which price was much above the average. When local fishermen, a few years ago, lifted two and one-half tons, the yield was considered exceedingly large.

Sturgeon, once so plentiful in Lake Huron, is now very scarce. Its value for caviar was unknown in earlier years. Once, an early fisherman recalls, while fishing near Osceola, and following a storm from the northeast, his fishing crew caught thirty or more sturgeon in one net, ranging from four to seven feet in length. There was never much demand for them, so they sold them to the Indians for 50 cents each. Fishermen, however, often boiled sturgeon to extract fish oil from them. Cedar soaked in this oil could be used as a float, and it made a good substitute for cork.

The writer recalls an oft-told story of childhood years. Her parents came to Iosco county in the late 1860's, from New York State. Her mother, who arrived in the spring of 1869, landed at the Commercial dock in East Tawas, where her attention was attracted by what seemed to be a pile of cordwood on the shore. It proved to be a pile of sturgeon, which the fishermen were happy to remove from the bay, as they were a nuisance to them.

Fish markets supplied by Iosco fishermen are located mostly in New York, Boston and Chicago.

When one realizes that only the Great Lakes produce large quantities of the fresh water fish that the trade demands, it is understood why the market for whitefish, trout, pickerel, perch and herring, is never glutted; also, why the fish buyers of the large cities are willing to advance large sums of money to the fishing firms, if necessary, to keep them engaged in their work.

Eighty years ago, James O. Whittemore, an early editor, lamented the flight of the age of poetry, when the lumbering industry succeeded the fishing industry at AuSable-Oscoda. In 1948 we are impelled to note that while Iosco's forests have been denuded of their white pine, Lake Huron remains "the great fish lake," of the Indians.

"In darkness dwells the people which knows its annals not."



## The Formation of Iosco County and the Townships of AuSable and Oscoda

With the Saginaw Treaty of 1819 opening up millions of acres of land for settlement in Michigan, it was a natural sequence that the United States government should extend its surveys over the Northern part of the Lower Peninsula.

Consequently, in April, 1840, the State Legislature parceled out the whole territory north of Township 20, into counties, and attached them all to Michilimackinac.

In this division, Iosco county as we know it today, was named Kanotin, the name memorializing an Indian chief of the Ottawa tribe, who had figured in a treaty between the Indians and the government.

However, in 1843, Henry R. Schoolcraft, who was Indian commissioner in Michigan at the time, prevailed upon the Legislature to change the names of many of the counties of Northern Michigan, and thus the name Iosco was substituted for Kanotin.

Iosco is an illegitimate Indian word—a favorite, it would seem, with Schoolcraft, who used it on different occasions in his writings, and changed its meaning at will. The most commonly accepted definition is “water of light”—a meaningless combination of words to us.

The Whittemores of Oakland county, who founded Tawas City in 1854, were astute politicians, and knowing the advantages of a county government, three years after their arrival here, or in 1857, petitioned the Legislature to erect the county of Iosco. This petition was granted, and the county was established with two townships—Sable (later changed to AuSable) and Tawas, dividing the county equally between its northern and southern boundaries.

It is of interest to note that the Act creating the county, also provided for the seat of government to be located on Ottawas Bay (Tawas Bay). The Whittemores owned most of the land fronting on the bay. When the first county officers were elected, all, save one, were members of the Whittemore family. Henry Daggett of AuSable was named surveyor. The Whittemores dominated county politics and filled many of the county offices for a number of years.

In 1867, Samuel W. Chilson and twenty-four others petitioned the Board of Supervisors to create the township of Plainfield from AuSable, describing the territory to be embraced in the new township as Township 23 North, Ranges 5, 6 and 7 East.

In 1869, Oscoda township was organized by an Act of the State Legislature. The territory was described as Township 24 North, Ranges 5, 6, 7, 8 and fractional 9 East, also parts of fractional Range 9 East, Township 23 North—thus taking land, again, from the township of AuSable.

In 1870, Thompson township was erected by the Board of Supervisors, taking Township 24 North, Range 5 East from Oscoda.

In 1878, Wilber township was organized, the territory being described as follows: Township 23 North, Ranges 7 and 8 East. Range 7 was detached from Plainfield township, and Range 8 was taken from AuSable township.

Since the organization of Oscoda township in 1869, the township of AuSable has not conformed to geographic lines. Certain descriptions of land, for the most part belonging to the Loud lumbering firm, have, from time to time, been detached from AuSable and added to Oscoda. The reason given for this is that the Louds were opposed to the sale of liquor, and Oscoda was, for many years, “dry” territory.

In 1891, Thompson township was vacated, and attached to Os-

coda township. However, a few years later in 1905 it was detached from Oscoda township and attached to Plainfield township, and still forms a part of that township.

## Vacating Thompson Township

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From the record of the Board of Supervisors, we note:

At the June session of the Board of Supervisors in 1891 the township of Thompson was vacated. The Board received a petition signed by Otis E. M. Cutcheon, Herbert M. Elliott, Granger Hill, Chrs Yockey, Charles Tanner, S. Paganetti, John Ward, Greene Pack, E. F. Holmes, Elmer G. Rix and Vernon E. Rix, freeholders of Oscoda township, and T. F. Thompson, W. C. Penoyar, W. V. Penoyar, John Butler, L. C. Syiappa, S. E. Dore, Selig Solomon, J. Beard, R. E. Pratt, S. B. Andrews, Temple Emery and James Thompson, freeholders of Thompson township, asking that the township be vacated and the territory comprised in it, added to the township of Oscoda.

A resolution to that effect was presented, and the motion to adopt same was carried unanimously.

Also from the county records, we quote the resolution commending the services of Thomas F. Thompson, adopted at the March, 1891, session of the Board of Supervisors, and carried by unanimous vote. The following supervisors were present:

Angell, Arn, Graves, Henry, Hottois, Latham, Zeiter, Cosgrove, Rodman, Sperr, Thompson, Orth and Wilson.

Whereas, Thomas F. Thompson of the township of Thompson, Iosco county, has been elected to the office of supervisor of the township which was organized by him and in grateful recognition of his honorable services named after him, for nearly twenty consecutive years and upwards, and

Whereas, during said long and memorable years he has been a faithful servant of the township, a cool and deliberate counsellor of the supervising legislators of Iosco county, a careful and exacting financier of the people's money, a congenial and praiseworthy associate of deserving co-members of the Board of Supervisors, and withal a good officer, a loyal citizen and an honest man, and

Whereas, In the natural course of human events and by the reports rife in the county, it is feared, as well as deplored, that said friend Thompson has expressed an inclination to lay aside his supervisorial robe, and bid a fond though final adieu; therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the expression of the members of the Board of Supervisors and the people of Iosco county, that T. F. Thompson be and is hereby most earnestly requested, without reference to or regard for political preference, to permit his name again to be enrolled among the Board of Supervisors and still retain the seat he has so ably filled for years, and not withdraw from our Board, and as feeble and deserving testimonial of the regard which his associates and friends have for him, and evidencing their recognition of the long and efficient service which he has rendered, be it

Resolved, That as the Board of Supervisors of Iosco county, we do hereby express our sincere thanks for his past services and wish him a couple decades or more of convivial and fruitful years to come; that we may meet him often and grasp his warm and heartfelt hand for years to come; and that a copy hereof be spread at length on the journal of the Board of Supervisors.

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Citizens of AuSable, in the community that had grown up around the sawmills, were not content to remain as a township organization, and the village of AuSable was incorporated by sanction of

the Board of Supervisors on October 15, 1872. This was the first village in Iosco county. However, by a Local Act in 1885, the Legislature reincorporated the village, which Act was amended in 1887. Two years later, or in 1889, by a Local Act of the Legislature the village became a city. This Act was amended in 1895, and AuSable remained a city until October, 1931, when it was vacated and was set back into AuSable township. A dwindling population was the reason for this change.

In 1885, the citizens in Oscoda township, living about the lumber mills near the mouth of the AuSable River, decided to incorporate as a village, and this was accomplished through a Local Act. Oscoda village was vacated, however, in October 1919, and the territory it embraced set back into Oscoda township. The reason for this change was due to the fact that the big Consumers Power Co.'s dams had been built in Oscoda township, and the tax money de-

rived therefrom went into the township coffers instead of the village treasury; and could not, therefore, be spent for village improvements.

Today, we find Oscoda township embracing Township 24 North, Ranges 6, 7, 8 and fractional 9 East, also a part of Township 23 North, Range 9 East. AuSable township is embraced in Township 23 North, Range 9 East. The line dividing the two townships is described as follows: Commencing at a point in the AuSable River on the line common to Section 4, Township 23 North, Range 9 East, and Section 34, Township 24 North, Range 9 East, thence following the main channel of the river to between Lots 18 and 19 of the Oscoda Boom Co.'s Subdivision of Block 19, east to State street; thence south to the southerly line of Block 1, of Loud, Gay & Co.'s Second Addition to the village of Oscoda; thence easterly to east line of Lot 6, Block 1; thence north to Division street;



J. BARLOW

STARTING ON HIS DAILY TRIP FROM HIS RIVERSIDE DAIRY FARM  
AT THE HARBOUR FOR OSKODA, AU SABLE AND OSCODA MILLS.



thence east on Division street to the line common to Lots 5 and 6, Block 8, of the Original Plat of Oscoda village; thence north on line common to Lots 5 and 6 to a point common to Lots 5, 6, 7 and 8; thence east on line common to Lots 6 and 7, Block 8; thence north on east line of Lot 7, Block 8, to Park Street; thence east to Lake Huron.

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AuSable is a French word, meaning "sand." Who gave the river its name, is unknown; but

doubtless it was named by some early French voyageur. The suitability of the name, however, is unquestioned.

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Oscoda was named by Edward Smith, of the Gratwick, Smith & Fryer Lumber Co., presumably for Oscoda county. The late Rev. Simon Greensky, Indian pastor of the Methodist Mission for a third of a century, says that the word comes from the Indian word, "ausko-do-yawg," meaning "where the plains commence."



“As unto the bow the cord is,  
So unto the man is woman;  
Though she bends him she obeys him,  
Though she draws him yet she follows—  
Useless each without the other.”

## The "Ghost" Community of the Plains

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We are prone to think that the tragedy of plains farming was enacted in the townships of Plainfield and Wilber. This is true only to the extent that these townships were organized from that section of AuSable township in which these abandoned farms lay.

Plains farming stamped itself upon Iosco county history for ten or a dozen years. Today, after a lapse of 75 years, the farming district that at one time could be found in T 23 N R 6 and 7 East, is almost obliterated, and has become the "ghost" community of the plains.

A gnarled apple-tree, a decaying fence post, perhaps a piece of iron distinguishable as part of a stove, or bits of crockery that would indicate dishes—these alone remain to tell the story that homes had been built in this region, and that an attempt was once made to cultivate the pine plains as farms, with failure and defeat as the results.

George P. Vorce and family are credited with being the first settlers of the plains. They took up a residence at the head of Cold Creek in Tawas township in 1863. The first attempt at plains farming, however, was made two years earlier, by the Hon. Gideon O. Whittemore, who, in the spring of 1861, planted wheat on the north-west quarter of section 8, in Tawas township. James O. Whittemore, in 1868, wrote some valuable historical sketches of Iosco county, in *The Iosco County Gazette*, and says of the Vorce family's removal to the plains: "Well do we remember the morning when Mr. Vorce, with his household goods loaded upon a wagon and surrounded by his family, made the first start for the interior. It required considerable faith and courage to leave all neighbors behind

and push into the wilderness alone, over roads that were almost impassable. Mrs. Amelia Vorce was the first white woman that ever settled upon the plains, and it was proposed at one time to call some one of the new townships Amelia, in honor of her." The suggestion was not carried out in the early days of the county's history, nor has it been since. Mr. Vorce's residence on the plains was not continuous. In 1864, when he was forty years old, he enlisted for service in the Civil War. At the same time, his son, Henry B. Vorce, aged eighteen years, also enlisted. They both served until the close of the war.

To the north and east of the Vorce homestead, on lands that were first a part of AuSable township, then a part of Plainfield township, and today are located in Wilber township, other settlers began plains farming. The pioneer of this region was Samuel W. Chilson, who in later years, was a resident of East Tawas. He located at the head of Silver Creek in 1864. To Mr. Chilson, more than to any other person, belongs the honor of inducing farmers to locate in Iosco in the early days. Business often called him to Saginaw, and not infrequently he traveled there afoot. He never failed to tell of the land in Iosco that could be easily cleared, and was open to homestead entry. His work in encouraging immigration, was successful. Before the Block House and the Schad House were built to care for the travelers and teams that the AuSable River lumbering trade demanded, Mr. Chilson's house was used as a stopping place by the lumberjacks who were bound camp-ward, and the teamsters who were in charge of the tote-teams that carried supplies from Tawas to the camps.

Among the early settlers who engaged in plains farming in Sections 28, 31 and 33, were Enos Gray, Eli Chilson, William Rollo, Charles Martin, B. M. and Frank-

lin Earl, Anson and Eben F. Abbott, John Gordon, Nelson and Gustavus Stevens, David Love, Francis, George and John Dawes, Wardwell Chase, Ezra and Ira Corsair, Calvin Nichols, William and Rozelle Lee, Joseph Britton, Charles Chase, Addison Stanton, the Cornell families, Henry F. Odell, Lester Wright, James Blust, George Reed, and others.

Mrs. Elizabeth Bruce, a widow, eighty years of age, was also an early settler, taking up a homestead of 160 acres. She earned the money necessary for locating her land by working out as hired help by the week in the summer of 1868. To quote Mrs. Bruce, she located in the region "to show some of the young folks how to farm it."

The plains region, or "the burnings," as it was often called, remained a part of the township of AuSable until October 15, 1867, when Plainfield township was organized. It was not until after the last plains settler had abandoned his farm that the township of Wilber was created, in 1878, and "the burnings" became a part of that township. The sites of these old homesteads on the plains, are, for the most part, located within the game refuge established on the Huron National Forest by the Federal government.

Place names in the plains region memorialize some of the early settlers. Gray's Creek ran through the Enos Gray farm; Stanton Creek receives its name from Addison Stanton; while Gordon Creek honored John Gordon; Wright Lake was located on the Lester Wright farm; Corsair bridge, over Silver Creek, was for the convenience of the Corsair families. In the early days it was only a beaver dam; but in later years a bridge was built over the dam. The hollow, near the Enos Gray place, bore the gruesome appellation of Dead Man's Hollow. Here, one James Ryan tumbled off the load the tote-team was hauling, as the down grade

was being made. The wagon passed over his body. He was taken to the Schad House in Section 13 of Township 23 North of Range 6 East, to be cared for, and he later died there. He was buried in the cemetery that the plains farmers had platted near the town line, in Section 18 of Township 23 North of Range 7 East.

Three hotels in the plains region cared for the transient trade that the lumber industry developed—The Sand Lake House in Grant township; the Block House, on Indian Lake, or Long Lake, as it was at first called; and the Schad House on the Thompson Road—all located within a radius of a half-dozen miles. The Sand Lake House received its name by reason of its proximity to Sand Lake. The Block House was built of hewn logs, and hence its name. The Schad House was opened to the public by ----- Schad, and owned and run by him for many years. The first floor of these plains hotels was usually divided into three rooms. Named in order of their importance, they were: Barroom, kitchen and dining room. There is a story told of one old inn keeper visiting at one of these lumbering days hotel.

"How is business?" said he; and the proprietor answered,

"Pretty poor," as he proceeded to treat his guest from the jug of whiskey.

"Is that all the whiskey you've got?" demanded the old-timer.

"Yes," replied his host.

"Well," rejoined the other, "no wonder business is poor. Why, man, no one ought to attempt to do business in this section, unless he has a barrel of whiskey on hand all of the time."

The normal life of any farming community was lived in the plains region. Weddings, births, deaths, new settlers, accidents, social gatherings, political discussions—all were chronicled. They were timely topics, on which to express one's views, when conversation about the farm crops and the biggest cut of

pine, lagged. A pioneer woman, who found romance awaiting her as she busied herself with the daily duties in the home of her brothers, explained the marriage of many of the young people in her day by saying, "I guess girls did not require so much to make a home then, as now." Church weddings were unknown, unless the couple went "outside" to be married. (This was the usual expression for designating any place beyond the boundary of Iosco county). A wedding at which a minister, or preacher, officiated, was a rare occurrence. The justice of the peace was empowered to perform the civil rites, and after a visit to his home, the nuptial knot was soon tied. Tradition relates that one afternoon one of the early schoolteachers closed school in due form, and then walked off and joined the waiting bridegroom. It was necessary to hire a new instructor, for the "married schoolteacher" was an unknown quantity in those days.

Doctors' services, however necessary, were often dispensed with. There were two reasons for this. Lack of money to pay for professional services, and resourcefulness that led a member of the family or a neighbor to perform a physician's work. Thus, when a young woman accidentally broke her collar bone, her brother set it, and thin boards tied securely to chest and across the shoulders were a substitute for adhesive tape until the bone knitted securely, and the danger of a deformed or sagging shoulder was past.

As a social diversion the quilting bee headed the list. The public dances and suppers at the lumbering days hostelries were events that attracted dancers for miles around. Every time one of these old hotels changed hands, it was duly opened to the public by a dance and supper.

The romance of the log cabin era and the log cabin people was enacted in the plains region. Every home in the community, save one

—that of Nelson Stevens—was a log cabin. The "biggest farmer of the plains" was Enos Gray. He would plant from ten to twenty acres in potatoes, and the lumbermen would come to his fields and haul the tubers away, paying \$1.00 per bushel for them. Wheat, corn, rye, vegetables of all kinds, and fruit trees were grown in this section. Some fields of clover grew unusually fine. In 1868, John Gordon reported that his corn and potatoes were the best he had ever seen anywhere, and that his neighbors' crops were as good as his own.

Stock-raising was in its infancy, partly due to the fact that transportation charges were so high as to almost prohibit the carrying of stock as freight on the boats. The lack of roads north of Bay City made it next to impossible to drive stock overland from Southern Michigan. Oxen were the beasts of burden, and took the place of the horse on the farm. The farmer who owned a span of horses was considered wealthy in this world's goods. Of the gathering of a hay crop on the AuSable River, several miles away, to eke out the crop raised on the plains, an interesting story is told. On the north side of the river, between Five Channels dam of today and Iargo Springs, are the tame meadows. Lumber camps flourished in that vicinity, and the tote-teams made their scheduled visits. Seed dropped from the wagons, and carried by the wind, found fertile soil on the river flats. Timothy and blue-joint flourished, as well as did the marsh hay, and for this reason the flats at this particular spot bore the name of "tame meadows." The plains farmers made hay in the tame meadows, and transported it across the river on a scow. Two hundred feet of shelving sand banks then lay between them and the road to their farms, but they carried the hay on their backs up the steep incline, then it was loaded on wagons, and the patient oxen plodded homeward with the load.



A splendid type of citizenship were these early settlers. Educational facilities for the children were established, and a school was opened. At first, school was held in the Abbott home—a log house; later, a post-frame schoolhouse was built on the northeast corner of Section 8, T 23 N, R 7 E. Here 16 or 18 scholars attended school. Summer terms of school, only, were held. Early teachers were Ada Ann Stevens, a daughter of Nelson Stevens; Susie Otterson, a step-daughter of John Gordon. Miss Otterson later married George P. Smith, then a widower, one of the founders of East Tawas; Jane Vorce, a daughter of George P. Vorce; and Lucius Abbott, a son of Anson Abbott.

Of a deeply religious turn of mind, these early pioneers welcomed the itinerant preacher, regardless of sect. As early as 1866, Rev. Jared Copeland, a Methodist minister, who was well-known along the shore in the early days, preached in the plains settlement. It was not uncommon for the settlers of Methodist persuasion to travel the ten miles between Tawas and the plains, over roads that were little more than trails, that they might attend religious services in Tawas, especially the quarterly meetings. Among this number are noted Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Chilson and Mrs. Amy Abbott Earl. Services in the plains region were held in the schoolhouse. One year, the farmers hired and paid for a minister (United Brethren faith) to hold services during the summer months, and at other times itinerant preachers brought the gospel to them. Thus, were they served by Cyrus Haner from Livingston county, and later by a Mr. Riggs and John Bullock. Presiding Elder Horace S. Barnaby of Gratiot county came; as did Rev. Barry Hamp of Kent county. Another minister to preach in the plains region was Elder Cornell of Livingston county. Mr. Cornell came first to visit relatives one sum-

mer. He returned on two other occasions. Although he was a man over seventy years of age, so great was his faith in the community that he planned to make his home there. Realizing that one of the great needs of the farmers was a sawmill, he got out the timber and put up the frame for a mill, near the forks of Silver Creek in Section 16. The Livingston county relatives opposed his plans believing him too old to carry them out. One of his daughters, to humor him, spent one summer on the losco plains with him. She caught his enthusiasm, and planned to take up a homestead. Her plans, however, were not carried out, and the sawmill venture did not materialize.

However, the first sawmill in the plains community was built in 1869 or 1870, by Spencer and Bennett, on Long Lake—Indian Lake of today. They hauled their lumber to Tawas City, over the newly-constructed Plank Road, and shipped it by boat to eastern and southern markets. This mill was in operation when Wilber township was organized. A school was located near the mill for the children of the families of employees.

Plains farming was carried on, also, about eight miles up the AuSable River from the villages of AuSable and Oscoda. At least two farms can be noted—the Wakefield place (now Old Orchard Park) and the Kirkendall place, a half-mile away. Good garden stuff and rye were raised, some on the river bottoms, and some on the plains. Mrs. Alonzo Kirkendall once related an interesting story of those early days—the trip from New York state to AuSable by boat, in 1869, and then the new home. Her husband homesteaded 160 acres, and they lived there eight years. The home was 24x36 feet in size, of hewed logs, outside and in, green Norway, grown on the place. A bedroom, buttery and combined kitchen, dining room and parlor, were on the



ground floor. The loft was one big room. The family lived in a logging camp until their home was built.

The first stock they bought were a yoke of oxen and a cow. Mrs. Kirkendall often wished for chickens, as they would have been company.

Their home was a stopping house for those who traveled the State Road from AuSable to the Thompson pineries. It was seven miles west to the next settlement. One year when the Louds were lumbering on Loud Creek, George Loud (he later became Congressman from this district) and a crew of 18 men, mostly French-Canadians, spent two weeks in the loft of the Kirkendall home while their camp was in process of construction.

This pioneer woman often cooked in the lumber camps. When she remained at home, and her husband went to camp, he arranged to visit home every fortnight. Often she would not see anyone during the length of time that he was absent.

A quilting bee was a red letter event, with eight women from the Plainfield settlement attending. The first piece of rag carpet woven on the first loom in Oscoda (a hand-made affair) went into the Kirkendall home, and as much fuss was made over this rag carpet in the woods, as would have been made if it had been the most expensive "store" carpeting.

Food prices make interesting reading. Pork was \$30 a bbl., beef, \$20, and flour, \$12. There were no game laws, and deer were killed when needed. It was nothing to have a barrel of venison on hand. Once Mr. Kirkendall killed five deer in three days. In 1875, he trapped five bears at a logging camp. The hide of the biggest bear sold for \$20. They extracted four gallons of oil from the bears, selling it to a Negro barber in Oscoda. He, in turn, sent it to Detroit to be used in making a

hair dressing. It was worth \$1.00 per quart.

A lumbering camp story shows the self-denial and tender hearts of lumberjacks. Mr. Kirkendall had taken a small lumbering job, and was employing eight men. Butter was a luxury in camp that winter, worth 50 cents a pound. From the cream on the milk the Kirkendall cow furnished, Mrs. Kirkendall was able to serve the men butter once a day. Came word of a neighbor woman who was ill, and to whom butter would be a treat and most acceptable. The men denied themselves butter at all meals, in order that a 2-lb. roll might be taken to the sick woman.

Again, plains farming did not prove profitable, and the Kirkendalls sold the Norway on their property, also the farm itself, to a Mr. Dudgeon of AuSable. They purchased a farm of greater soil fertility in the new township of Wilber, built another log house and barn, and took up their residence in another community.

The heart strings tighten as one recalls the experience of Mrs. Hiram Colegrove, who came to Iosco county with her two little children, and moved into camp with her husband. She did not see a woman's face for over a year, and when, finally, she did meet a woman in the wilderness, she broke down and cried for sheer joy. Mrs. Colegrove cooked at the Block House, and in camps, for many years, yet never lost any of the sweet, gentle dignity of her character, despite the fact that her associations were often rough and uncouth.

Romances flourished in the plains community. Amy Abbott married B. M. Earl; Ada Ann Stevens married Charles Vorce; and Rozelle Lee married a Miss Dilworth. Nettie Martin, who was a daughter of Mrs. Enos Gray, married William B. Whittemore, of the Tawas City Whittemores. Lucy Earl became the wife of Thomas Glendon; and Eli Chilson

married a Miss Smith, the sister of Reuben Smith, a longtime resident of the Hemlock Road area.

Why did plains farming fail? Eben Abbott, the last of the settlers to leave the community, sums up the failure in this manner: The farmers did not know how to farm light soil. He says, the plains sand has little, if any, vegetable matter, and it needed barn-

yard fertilizer to make it productive. Farmers did not and could not keep enough cattle to be of any value to them. Light soil, in its natural state, will grow hill crops, but nothing sown broadcast, or thick, as it takes too much moisture out of the soil.

And thus finis is written to a colorful chapter in early county history.

“We'll tak' a cup o' kindness yet,  
For the Days of Auld Lang Syne.”

## When White Pine Was King

Ye old-time lumberman may know that the lumber industry in the AuSable River region reached its peak in 1890, but what words would he use to convey to a modern the meaning of 324,503,531 feet of lumber—the actual cut of the lumber mills at AuSable-Oscoda that year? Would he place a money value on it, as of that time? If so, then we should have to multiply those figures by ten or more to gain a present day idea of value. Would he attempt to put the lumber in piles, and ask us to visualize the result? Thirty miles of lumber piles is beyond our comprehension.

Thus, our deduction that modern minds cannot grasp the magnitude of the lumber industry in the halcyon days when White Pine was king at AuSable-Oscoda; and, perhaps, even the men most vitally interested in lumbering at that time could not intelligently grasp the figures that represent the half-century of the harvesting of pine, if such figures were placed before them.

A statement that has stood undisputed since 1883, when a history of the Lake Huron Shore was published, notes that in 1836 a saw mill was built at VanEttan Lake, by Howard and VanEttan. Considerable money was expended in building a water mill there, but after the dam had been carried away or undermined a number of times, the project was abandoned. No lumber was sawed. No authority has ever been cited for this paragraph of early history. VanEttan Lake has borne no other name, so, perhaps, in its name this early lumbering venture in the county was memorialized by the government men who surveyed this region in the early 1840's.

A timber survey in 1866, revealed that the largest amount of pine, and the best stand north

of Saginaw, was growing along the banks of the AuSable River.

Approximately four and one-half billion feet of lumber was sawed in the twins towns at the mouth of the AuSable, in the half-century of time that followed the building of the first saw mill. Much of the timber thus sawed, as well as that rafted to Buffalo and Tonawanda, New York, and Cleveland, Ohio, was floated down the AuSable River. The reasons given for rafting logs and long timber on the AuSable more successfully than at other points, were: "The AuSable River is comparatively straight, always rapid, and being well supplied by springs at its headwaters, is always full, hence, long timber can be easily run; lumbering, if it is desirable, can be done at any season, and the delays and uncertainties of scant water break-ups, and grounding logs from too much freshet are unknown to log drives on the river. Lumbering can be commenced a month earlier and continued a month later than at most points."

The pioneers in the lumber business at AuSable were Backus Bros., (Absalom and Albert S.) who came in 1865. They built a small mill on what is now known as Potts' Point, for the purpose of sawing material for a larger mill. Steamboats and sailcraft brought the supplies to AuSable, and small fish boats lightered out to meet them, and convey the supplies to shore. The first mill burned in 1867, but the larger mill was operated successfully until 1875, when it was sold to J. E. Potts of Simcoe, Canada. Mr. Potts, individually, operated the mill until 1883, when he organized the J. E. Potts Salt and Lumber Company. The Potts mill became one of the largest mills in the world, with an annual capacity of over seventy-five million feet of lumber. The last year of their existence, 1890, the cut exceeded ninety-eight million feet. In the expansion program of the Potts



Company, they tapped the vast resources of timber in Oscoda county. A narrow gauge railroad was built—the old AuSable and Northwestern line, or the Potts logging road. At its beginning the road was about fifty miles in length. Its terminal in Oscoda county was known as Potts' Headquarters, later to become identified as McKinley, and now one of the "ghost" lumbering towns of Northern Michigan. So indelibly did J. E. Potts stamp his identity upon the lumber industry, that his very name represented money made from pine holdings. In the fall of 1890, the Potts Company failed—a tragedy that marked the beginning of the decline of the lumbering towns. In fact, prior to the time of the big fire in July, 1911, the day it was noised aboard that the Potts Company had failed, was considered the blackest day in the history of the two towns.

Also, in 1865, the firm of Loud, Priest and Shepherd was attracted to AuSable. Like other firms, they built a small mill to saw lumber for a contemplated larger one. In 1866 this larger mill was completed, and was operated by the firm for about a year. At this time the firm was re-organized under the name of Loud, Priest and Gay; and still later another re-organization was made, and the firm of Loud, Gay and Company, emerged. In 1872, a second mill was built designated as the timber mill. In 1876, a mammoth salt block was built. That year, however, because of financial complications, the business was placed in the hands of trustees, under the name of Oscoda Salt and Lumber Company. The following year, 1877, the first mill and the salt block were destroyed by fire. Although a loss of \$150,000 was entailed, the lumber company began immediately to construct a larger and better mill, that was designated the "Iron" mill. The lumber company was known as the Oscoda Salt and Lumber Company until 1887,

when the firm name was changed to H. M. Loud and Sons Lumber Company. This name was in effect until 1898, when the firm became The H. M. Loud Sons' Company, and this name continued until the lumbering firm was no more.

The third lumber firm to engage at AuSable was A. Burrows, who built his mill in 1866. This mill finally came into possession of John C. Gram, who later sold it to Edward F. Loud. Mr. Loud operated it until 1883, when he sold it to T. F. Thompson and Penoyar Brothers. A year later Mr. Thompson sold his interest in the mill, and the firm became known as Penoyar Brothers. The Penoyars were in business in AuSable for ten years, and then moved their mill and machinery to Chippewa county, in the Upper Peninsula.

These three mills, in 1867, represented a capital investment of \$383,000.00

A lumbering firm bearing the name of Smith, Kelley and Dwight purchased about one hundred acres in AuSable township in 1867. They platted a village, and called it Oscoda. It was not incorporated, however, until 1885. The original lots were sold subject to the condition that no liquor could be sold on them, and until 1884 there was no licensed saloon in the community.

This lumbering firm built the first docks at AuSable in 1868. They built their first mill in 1873, but it was destroyed by fire four years later. That year, too, (1877) the firm became known as Gratwick, Smith and Company, and in 1880 the firm name was changed to Gratwick, Smith and Fryer. In 1882, the firm rebuilt the burned mill, and they added large salt blocks. The brine was pumped from East Tawas through large wooden pipes.

Other mills built in the region in 1868 were the John F. Park and Company mill and the Holcher

shingle mill, but they operated only a few years.

In 1873, Charles Lee of Saginaw erected a mill, but it stood idle for several years, and finally, in 1880, John C. Gram purchased it. After running it for three years, Mr. Gram sold the mill to the AuSable Lumber Company. He was the manager for this company. The mill was in operation until 1890, when it burned, and was never rebuilt.

Also, in 1873, Stephen Moore and Charles Tanner commenced the construction of a saw mill in Oscoda. The money panic of that year affected the firm, and work on the mill was halted until 1876. It was completed that year, and ran until 1890. Two years later it was leased by Gratwick, Smith and Fryer. Then is passed into the hands of the AuSable Lumber Company, who operated it until about 1896. In 1900 it was purchased by Hull and Ely, local Oscoda residents, who operated it for several years.

In 1877, the firm of Pack, Woods and Company (George W. Pack, John L. Woods and Edwin F. Holmes) purchased large holdings of pine lands on the Pine and AuSable Rivers, also some 200 acres of land in what later became Oscoda village, for a site for a mill and yards, and the following year built one of the finest mills in the state. A salt block, dock, barns, shops, store buildings and two fine homes for the resident partners, were erected, also. The beautiful Greene Pack home still stands, in its lovely setting of trees, on U. S.-23. The Pack, Woods Company operated until 1894.

Two years after the Potts failure, or in 1892, the H. M. Loud and Sons Lumber Company brought the mill machinery, railroad equipment, tracts of timber, and valuable lands, etc., belonging to the Potts company. They broadened their business operations, and tapped vast virgin forests by building branch railroad spurs. Good farm-

ing land was opened up to settlers, and what had been Potts' Headquarters developed into the nucleus of a thriving lumbering town—McKinley. Although the repair shops for their railroad were located at McKinley, the Louds had all of their timber hauled to AuSable, where their big mills continued to run night and day. Business boomed at McKinley for about ten years, and until the railroad repair shops burned. Lack of timber did not warrant their rebuilding, population steadily decreased (the majority of the people moving to AuSable), and McKinley, once so prosperous, was entirely obliterated from the map, to become one of the "ghost" lumbering towns of Michigan.

A number of independent lumber operators were identified with AuSable and Oscoda for a couple of decades before lumbering ceased to be a factor there, among them being Dan B. McDonald, Christian Yockey, the Northern Lumber Company, Cowley and Hayes, and the Solomon Lumber Company. So thorough was the work of the latest operators that saw logs ("dead heads") were even salvaged from the AuSable River, and much valuable timber cut from them.

A spirit of friendly rivalry was manifest among mill and camp crews in lumbering days, while the most cordial relations existed between employer and employee. It was this rivalry and this friendship that accounted for many a big day's work.

One year, Pack, Woods and Company cut sixty-three million feet of lumber during the season—the largest cut ever made by a single mill. The year previously they had cut fifty-five million—which was the best record then. The capacity of their mill was forty million feet of lumber a season, the mill running night and day.

A newspaper account of a day's work in May, 1880, in the Pack-Woods mill, read as follows:

"On the 8th instant the improved, modern saw mill of Pack, Woods and Company cut 1,100 logs in a day of twelve hours; in other words, every thirty-seven seconds a log came up the incline into the mill, and passed out at the other end in the shape of lumber loaded upon cars! The circulars sliced off its sides; the gang cut it into boards; the edgers took off the edges; the trimming saws whisked off the blackened ends; the button saws cut the slabs into required lengths; the stave, lath and heading mills cut out all that was worth saving, and the carriers took the refuse to the burner—in thirty-seven seconds.

"Wonderful as this is, it is not the limit of this mill. It can cut up a log every thirty seconds—better even than that—1,500 logs per diem. This, we have heard it intimated, is the aim of the firm, and those who have watched their course here and seen the enterprise, energy and force characterizing all their business adventures cannot reasonably doubt that they will accomplish what they aim to.

"The scale of the 1,100 logs referred to, which, by the way, is the greatest number of logs ever cut by any Shore mill in a day, aggregated 161,000 feet. On Tuesday last the mill cut 168,000 feet, but the total of logs cut was not as great as on the 8th instant. The run of logs on each of the days cited was small, taking eight to the thousand. With a fair lot of logs, the mill can easily cut 200,000 feet per diem."

Early in 1867, the AuSable River Boom Company was organized, and it operated for ten years. The Oscoda Boom Company was organized in 1877, by local stockholders, and it operated for twenty

years. The quantity of lumber cut annually for thirty years, as represented by the logs handled by the boom companies for that length of time is aptly illustrated by the records of the boom companies, as follows:

#### **AuSable River Boom Company**

|      |       |             |
|------|-------|-------------|
| 1867 | ----- | 48,800,000  |
| 1868 | ----- | 34,102,341  |
| 1869 | ----- | 44,500,000  |
| 1870 | ----- | 60,000,000  |
| 1871 | ----- | 52,000,000  |
| 1872 | ----- | 105,000,000 |
| 1873 | ----- | 96,148,000  |
| 1874 | ----- | 52,000,000  |
| 1875 | ----- | 55,000,000  |
| 1876 | ----- | 47,150,000  |

Total ----- 594,700,341

#### **Oscoda Boom Company**

|      |       |             |
|------|-------|-------------|
| 1877 | ----- | 68,800,000  |
| 1878 | ----- | 62,000,000  |
| 1879 | ----- | 113,000,000 |
| 1880 | ----- | 138,500,000 |
| 1881 | ----- | 160,232,347 |
| 1882 | ----- | 185,400,000 |
| 1883 | ----- | 194,600,000 |
| 1884 | ----- | 176,038,000 |
| 1885 | ----- | 201,437,986 |
| 1886 | ----- | 207,458,138 |
| 1887 | ----- | 249,172,865 |
| 1888 | ----- | 283,782,031 |
| 1889 | ----- | 294,974,580 |
| 1890 | ----- | 324,503,531 |
| 1891 | ----- | 175,331,717 |
| 1892 | ----- | 192,088,470 |
| 1893 | ----- | 93,546,010  |
| 1894 | ----- | 68,884,710  |
| 1895 | ----- | 60,239,120  |
| 1896 | ----- | 57,530,010  |

Total ----- 3,307,419,515

Grand Total ----- 3,902,119,856

Approximately fifty million feet of lumber were cut annually after 1896, until finis was written to the lumber industry.

## Old Tales of the Huron Shore

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In addition to, and yet a part of, the chapter relating to the Lumber Industry, these old tales of the Huron Shore are incidents in the life of AuSable and Oscoda that, unless printed, the story of the old towns would not be complete.



## River Drivers

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Driving the logs down the AuSable River was a feat accomplished by trained workers. The foreman of a crew ruled his men by sheer brute force, yet he never expected his men to do work that he himself would not attempt to do. Work was hazardous, dangerous, and often disagreeable. The swift current of the river necessitated quick action on the part of the drivers to keep the logs moving. We incline to the belief that mortality among river drivers would have been high had it not been for the substantial food furnished them, and the fact that they worked in the great out-doors.

Occasionally, logs jammed while being driven down the river, and until the "key" log had been dislodged, the logs kept piling up, in disarray, one on top of another. We are told of one log jam on the river below the site of Five Channels Dam, that was three miles in length. So closely had the logs jammed that one could walk across the river at this point on sawlogs.

Picturesque, indeed, and maybe dangerous, too, were the times, when the lumberjacks, in vivid

mackinaws, caulked their way down the AuSable, to the communities at the mouth of the river, and distributed prosperity to the merchants and others, and made night hideous with their noise.

A never-to-be-forgotten scene is the building of a raft of logs, and then, when completed, towed to its destination by a tug. One of the stories related to us concerning the towing of a raft of logs, is worth repeating: The captain of the tug had been ordered by the men who had engaged him, to allow none of the raftsmen to use a rowboat to go ashore as the raft swept by the cities along the route as they towed the logs to Buffalo. They reached the Detroit River in early evening, opposite the foot of Third Street. The expert riverman asked for the use of a rowboat to go ashore. He was refused. Nothing daunted, he walked out onto the boom logs that held the raft together. Soon he espied the log that would suit his purpose. A kick by his caulked boot soon sent the log outside of the boom logs. With the agility of a cat he sprang upon the log, crossed the river, and arrived at his destination. He returned to the tug via the same route, and he carried with him that which he went after—a jug of whiskey.

## The Churches

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The pioneer church of the AuSable-Oscoda community, as well as of the Huron shore, was the Methodist. When the members of the Loud lumbering firm conferred on the subject of building a town, their plans called for the erection of a house of worship. Henry M. Loud, the senior member of the firm, was an ordained Methodist minister. The Indian mission church on the Alcona-Iosco line was an outgrowth of the missionary activities of the AuSable-Oscoda church.

As early as 1866, however, a priest from Alpena, administered to the spiritual wants of the residents of the Catholic faith, and in 1870, he bought land in AuSable on which church buildings were erected later. The first resident

pastor came in 1875. A church was built, also a parochial school. Some nine hundred families formed the parish in the hey-day of the lumbering era. The larger percentage of these were French-Canadians. Then the parish was divided, and a building erected in Oscoda for a school and church. However, in 1901, only one hundred and seventy-five families were listed in the two towns— a mute evidence of the decline of the lumber industry.

Other church organizations that flourished in the community, and built houses of worship, were the Baptists, the Presbyterians, the Episcopalians, and the German Lutherans. The latter church was sold to the Swedish population of the same faith. In addition to these churches, the Jewish population built a synagogue, which was a credit to the towns.

## Transportation

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Until 1871, transportation facilities to Iosco county were limited to travel by boat. AuSable and Oscoda were "shut in," as early residents were wont to say, from the time navigation closed in the fall until it opened up in the springtime. Great was the rivalry between boats to be the first to dock after the closed season. "Loaded to the gunwales" aptly describes the size of the cargoes of freight in early spring, while the same phrase describes the cargoes carried before navigation closed.

A stage line was operated up the shore for a dozen years—from 1871 to 1883. The first operator was J. E. Wiley, who ran a bus from Standish to Alpena. In 1872, however, the stage line was purchased by Nelson Green, who operated it until 1883—the date of the coming of the railroad.

Development of the Huron shore communities was greatly retarded by the lack of means of transportation, other than by boat. In the late 1860's, Orlando Newman of East Tawas was elected to the State Legislature on a "roads" platform. The word "good" is in-

tentionally omitted. The citizens of "the shore" would have been content with a road that was passable; and they were desirous of calling the attention of the State authorities to the situation that prevailed at what was termed "the AuGres Swamp."

James O. Whittemore, the public-spirited pioneer editor, publicized, in caustic vein, that at the entrance to this swamp a sign should be erected, to read: "Leave hope behind, all ye who enter here."

By December, 1883, the Detroit, Bay City and Alpena Railroad had extended its line to AuSable-Oscoda. The railroad station built at that time is still in use. A dozen years later the road was sold, and became known as the Detroit and Mackinac Railroad.

Notwithstanding the railroad facilities, passenger boats continued to stop at AuSable and Oscoda, until the docks fell into disuse by reason of the burning or dismantling of the sawmills that they had served. Many pleasures in the early days were derived from simple things—and a pleasure often indulged in was to go aboard a passenger boat at an AuSable dock and disembark at an Oscoda dock.

## Post Offices

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From its beginning as a fishing port in 1848, until the close of the Civil War, the population of the AuSable-Oscoda community was largely transient. Yet, many persons realized that here was the nucleus for a town, and labored for those institutions upon which a town is founded.

Postal service was established at AuSable, in 1857, with Elijah Grandy as the first postmaster. Prior to that time, mail was addressed to Bay City or Tawas City. It was brought by fish boats, during the season of navigation; by dog sled, with an In-

dian driver, in the winter time. Of the first named method of mail delivery, Mrs. Sherman Wheeler, the wife of one of the earliest lighthouse keepers on Tawas Point, was wont to remark that "the mail was often soaked with water, and the mail carrier with whiskey."

In 1876, the postoffice department at Washington was petitioned to change the name of the office to "Oscoda." However, a year later, the AuSable postoffice was re-established, with James E. Forrest as postmaster. George P. Warner, who had been the AuSable postmaster, was retained in the Oscoda office. Both communities had postal facilities until the big fire in 1911. After that date, the AuSable office was discontinued.



## The Schools

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From its humble beginning in the fishing era, when children of school age were taught first, in a private home, and later, in a rude structure built by fishermen, the public school system of AuSable kept pace with the development of the town. The first school was built on the State road; the first teacher was Miss Jennie Doyle.

The winter of 1868-'69 found the increase in school population so great, that another school was opened, on the second floor of the O'Toole building. F. D. Sturdevant was the teacher.

In 1869, a new school was erected, and, additions were made to it in 1874-'75.

The AuSable schools were graded in 1877.

Beside the public school in AuSable, a parochial school was established, as noted elsewhere.

Public school facilities were open to the children of Oscoda, soon aft-

er the organization of that township. A parochial school was opened, too, in the mid-1880's.

Driving north on U. S.-23 today, beyond the business district of Oscoda, on the left-hand side of the highway, one passes a grove of poplar trees. Here stood the Pack school, across the street from more than one hundred homes that were occupied by the employees of the Pack, Woods and Company mill.

The Oscoda schools were graded, and the courses of instruction in all the schools in the north end of the county compared favorably with those in similar lumbering towns of the state.

Early graduates of these schools were as proud of their accomplishments as are modern grads. From the dim past we recall the following bit of verse from an original graduation song in the Oscoda schools:

"We're the Class of Eighty-eight,  
We are happy now to state;  
And we are much elated,  
For tonight we're graduated."

## The Great Mill Strike

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For the most part, the relations between employer and employee in the lumbering era, were cordial. In fact, one thinks of the twin towns as a big, happy family. There was one exception, however, the great mill strike of 1884.

The year previously, the saw-mill employees had worked ten hours daily, with pay every week. The mill owners had other plans for 1884, and when an agreement could not be reached (the men were content with conditions as

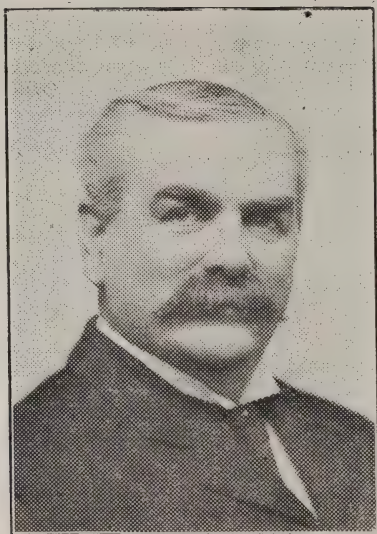
prevailed in 1883) the employees went out on strike, on June 17th.

As a measure of precaution, the mill owners called on the sheriff of the county for protection. He in turn, sought assistance from the National Guard of the state. Pinkerton detectives from Chicago were secured by the mill owners.

To the credit of all, damage to property was slight during the ten days that the men were idle.

Finally, John C. Gram acceded to the demands of the men he employed. Other employers quickly followed his example—and the result was quiet in labor circles forever afterwards.

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The late Congressman George A. Loud

## Iosco's Representative in Congress

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The distinction of being the only Iosco resident to date to serve in the halls of Congress, belongs to the late George A. Loud, AuSable lumberman. He represented the Tenth Michigan District from 1902 to 1912; was defeated that year; was re-elected in 1914; but defeated again in 1916. He withdrew from politics that year.

George Alvin Loud was a son of Henry M. Loud, head of the lumbering firm that operated at AuSable-Oscoda for 50 years. He was peculiarly adapted to and fitted for the handling of men and supplies, and in the early days was given charge of woods operations for the firm. He formed with his employees friendships that lasted through many years. In politics, he was a Republican, following in the footsteps of his father.

It has been said frequently: "George Loud put the Tenth Mich-

igan District on the map." During his entire tenure of office he served on the important Naval Committee. His untiring efforts were crowned with success when the body of John Paul Jones, America's first naval hero, was brought from foreign soil to rest in America; and, also, due to his efforts, the boys who met an untimely death when the battleship Maine was blown up in the harbor of Havana, in 1898, found a resting place in the sacred home soil of Arlington, at last.

Mr. Loud's monument in Iosco county is the Huron National Forest. He brought this project to the attention of Congress in 1908, and labored for it until it became a reality a year later.

After the disastrous fire of 1911, when the Loud lumbering interests were destroyed, George Loud moved from the district. He engaged in lumbering in Oregon, and he met a tragic death in an auto accident at Marshfield, Oregon, in 1925.

He lies buried in the AuSable-Oscoda cemetery among his "old friends of long ago."



## Newspapers

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"The AuSable and Oscoda News," published by P. D. Bissell, was established in 1877. The paper was sold two or three times, and finally came into possession of Charles S. Pierce, in 1883, who changed the name to "The Saturday Night." In 1893, Will MacGillivray became editor of the paper, and the name was changed to "The Oscoda Press." During all these years the paper was Republican in politics.

In 1884, W. M. Featherly commenced publication of "The Lakeside Monitor." Mr. Featherly waxed strong on newspaper "rows." He spared none of his brother editors—C. S. Pierce, of "The Saturday Night"; C. R. Jackson of "The Iosco County Gazette," at East Tawas; and M. Murphy, and later Len J. Patterson of "The Tawas Herald," at Tawas City. The slightest provocation opened the vials of his vitriolic wrath. Mr. Pierce was THE thorn in his flesh, however, and "the lion editor of the Huron shore," did not confine his quarrels to newspaper columns, as far as Mr. Pierce was concerned. Naturally, the citizenry of the community took sides in these squabbles of the newsmen. On one occasion, the firemen of AuSable were called to extinguish a blaze at "The Monitor" office, that had started on the outside of the building. The odor of kerosene was strong, according to firemen first on the scene. There was every

reason to believe that arson had been attempted, but whoever was responsible was not apprehended. On another occasion, someone entered the office, and while forms of type were not destroyed, they were rendered useless until they could be cleaned up. This act, also, passed unnoticed, as far as the officers of the law were concerned. Often threatened with criminal libel, Mr. Featherly escaped punishment until the fall of 1895. He blackened the eyes of the chief of police of AuSable, it was alleged, and he was arrested for disorderly conduct on the street. He was placed in the city lock-up. A few months later, "The Monitor" was discontinued, and the editor went to Tennessee, and later to Florida, where he established the first newspaper in Dade county. Some twenty years ago, Mr. Featherly came back to Iosco county for a brief visit. We met him; we had heard about him from our youth up; he even exceeded our expectations, for he was, without a doubt, the homeliest man we had even seen. He was enroute to Hollywood, he told us, to cash in on his looks.

In 1885, believing there was need for a paper to espouse the principles of the Democrat party, a company was formed, with Thomas D. Hawley, a prominent lawyer, as president, and "The Iosco Democrat" was established. After a short life, it was succeeded by "The Times," another Democrat paper. This paper went the way of its predecessor, and—"the irony of fate"—the equipment of the office was purchased by the Republican papers of the county.

## The Call to the Colors

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According to a record in the minutes of the Board of Supervisors in 1862, there were 52 men of military age in Iosco county. Unfortunately, the names are not listed.

However, AuSable and Oscoda became the home of many Civil War veterans, and two Grand Army of the Republic Posts were organized there. John Earl Post, No. 236, was organized in Oscoda, March 11, 1884, and disbanded February 25, 1902. The name memorialized an Iosco county soldier, who was elected a justice of the peace in AuSable township in the first election after the erection of Iosco county in 1857. He was a member of the Board of Supervisors, and chairman of the Board, in 1861.

The charter members of John Earl Post were: James Quinn, Alfred Phillips, Francis Demming, Jesse Foster, Joseph E. Sawtelle, William N. Hively, Charles H. Hanford, Watson F. Bisbee, Jesse L. Shank, Lavant Mead, Elijah Hough, Edwin Francis Holmes, Charles A. Friedlander, Samuel Utley, David Shelley, Elijah Rockwood, Charles Rathburn, Luke Phillips, Francis C. Miller, John Mason, Thomas H. Ward, William H. Simpson, Robert Lee, Albert Holt, Orange S. Mason, Odillon

Bennoit, Charles Gerring, William H. Hall, William Phillips, Peter B. Craft, Theodore W. Hiltz, James Bothwell.

The first officers, elected and appointed, were:

Post Commander—Edwin Francis Holmes; Senior Vice-Commander—James Quinn; Junior Vice-Commander—Charles A. Friedlander; Officer of the Day—Joseph A. Schwren; Quartermaster—Alfred Phillips; Adjutant—John A. Worth; Chaplin—Joseph E. Sawtelle; Officer of Guard—Lavant Mead; Sergeant-Major—Luke Phillips; Quartermaster Sergeant—Jesse L. Shank.

November 30, 1887, Iosco Post, No. 391, was instituted at AuSable and Oscoda. This Post disbanded in 1890. The charter members were: George Haskins, Granger Hill, Alfred Phillips, Thomas Ward, Albert M. Holt, Peter E. Shien, James K. Merrick, Mathew Crothers, John B. Thompson, Abram White (alias Abram Johnson), Horace S. Bacon, Alonzo Kirken-dall, Alva Smith, Edgar M. Billings, John Mason, John T. House, Timothy Shien, Carolus Vaughn, Andrew J. Morse, Henry O. Nightingale, Robert Goodfellow, Swasey Gordon, George S. Roberts, James McGuire, James H. Watkins.

A Sons of Veterans organization flourished in Oscoda for a time. It was named the Edwin F. Holmes Camp, honoring Mr. Holmes, who was a member of the lumbering firm of Pack, Woods & Co.



The Winners in the Famous Base Ball Game

## A Famous Baseball Game

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A rosewood bat awaits display in a collection of pioneer or historic articles in Iosco county. This bat is the trophy of a game played in 1875 at AuSable-Oscoda. It was won by the Mutuals, a team of East Tawas and Tawas City players, against the AuSable-Oscoda team.

The bat was a prize offered by D. H. Hawes, a merchant of East Tawas, to the baseball club winning the championship of Iosco county that year.

No line-up of the losers is available, nor is the name of the team; but of the players in the winning team for the final game an authentic record has been kept. They were Harry L. Cameron, pitcher and captain; George Davey, treas-

urer and 1st baseman; James E. Dillon, Hi Sims, Jack Sims, Fred Levenseller, Fred Whitemore, Nels Brabon, Sam Lobdell and Nelson Sims. The game was umpired by R. B. McKnight, superintendent of the East Tawas schools.

One of the winners once wrote in this way about the games played by this team: "We won the trophy without masks, protector, gloves of any kind or shin guards, and our bats were often parts of peavy or cant-hook stocks; but we always had a good supply of arnica and rags, and a ball that needed sewing up after every game."

Tradition says that the game was won in spite of the fact that the North-enders put gin in the drinking water. No explanation, however, has ever been given as to why the visitors drank from the home-town boys' water pail.



## Communities in a Community

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If one lived outside the AuSable-Oscoda community in the lumbering era, it was hard to understand the ease with which the natives designated the place of abode of others in the same community—much as one today, in a city, designates the name of a street to indicate a place of residence.

There was Loudtown, in AuSable, where the elite lived.

There was Piety Hill, in Oscoda. When the big fire of 1911 leveled the two towns, Piety Hill alone escaped the flames.

There was Dead Sable—a cluster of houses on the outskirts of AuSable, close to the river channel that bears the name “Dead Sable.”

There was Packtown—one hundred and ten homes, housing three hundred or more people, built up around the Pack, Woods and Company mill—each house numbered.

There was the Red Row in AuSable—the homes of men employed by the Loods. Houses were identical in architecture—painted red, and numbered. They lined both sides of a long street.

There was Potts’ Point—the piece of land bounded on the west and south by the AuSable River, and by Lake Huron on the east. There were fifty homes there—more pretentious than in other sections of the community.

There was Stovepipetown—a cluster of rude houses, with a stovepipe through the roof, instead of a brick chimney.

There was Holmesville—apart from Packtown—but its male inhabitants employed by Pack, Woods and Company.

There was Dalystown—Twenty homes, where fishermen lived, and where a couple of grocery stores transacted a successful business.

There were ten or fifteen houses

in the William Mowatt Addition to AuSable, forming a small community.

And there was Hardscrabble—beyond Packtown—of which the least written is best. Tradition says that Hardscrabble gave Piety Hill its name; but it is not on record that Piety Hill retaliated by naming Hardscrabble.

A human interest story of life in the 1870’s and 1880’s in Packtown, was once related by Mrs. Angeline Frechette, who lived many years in that community, by reason of the fact that her husband was a scaler for the company. She had a family of eleven children. She was handy with the needle, which accomplishment was of material help in keeping her brood clothed. She knitted the stockings for all of them—three pairs having to suffice for two children.

House rent was a big item, although a small home could be rented for \$3.00 per month; larger homes rented for \$5.00 per month. The father who could command wages of \$3.00 per day, was in a class by himself.

Food prices were low, because wages were low. Three dozen fresh eggs cost 25 cents; lard was 8 cents a pound; butter was 15 cents; steak was 10 cents; and stew meat could be bought for 5 cents. In one season, one could buy a bushel of peaches for \$1.00; or a bushel of green tomatoes for 15 cents.

Flour was \$5.00 a barrel. It was shipped in by boat. In the fall of the year the winter’s supply of six barrels was purchased.

“We lived like squirrels,” recounted Mrs. Frechette, as she told of canning wild berries and laying in the supply of groceries for winter’s use.

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“Let us talk of other days,  
Let us laugh at other ways—  
All these years of life apart  
Have not severed heart from  
heart.”

## Did AuSable Aspire to Become the County Seat?

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Did the city of AuSable ever aspire to become the county seat of Iosco? Citizens of the north end of the county a half-century ago said emphatically, "No." However, citizens of the south end of the county said "Yes," just as emphatically. They believed that the entering wedge had been driven when, in 1891, George Orth, who represented the Iosco District in the State Legislature, introduced a bill providing for the holding of two terms of the Iosco county circuit court yearly in AuSable.

In spite of the fact that the Board of Supervisors voiced its disapproval of the local Act, and prominent citizens of the Tawas and others in the southern part of the county, opposed the measure, the bill was passed, became a law, and its provisions carried out for about four years.

Of course, the political sagacity of the Whittemores of Tawas City, who had been instrumental in the organization of the county in 1857, was shown in one section of the Act that provided for the erection of Iosco county. It read: "The county seat of said county shall be established by the Board of Supervisors at Ottawas Bay." Still, in 1891, Tawas City was struggling along with a village charter, with no other representative on the Board of Supervisors than the supervisor of Tawas township, while AuSable had attained the rank of a city, with each of

its three wards represented on the Board of Supervisors, as well as its mayor and city attorney duly qualified to sit on the Board. With AuSable township and Oscoda township supervisors, joining the city representation in any move they wished to make, it is readily seen that they had a block of seven votes. True, the rest of the county held the balance of power with nine votes, but balance of power could easily become a tip-up-pity thing—hence, the alarm caused by Mr. Orth's bill, and the question raised, "Did AuSable aspire to become the county seat?"

AuSable and Oscoda citizens, who sponsored the unusual act, brought out these facts, that could not be denied: More than one-half of the population of the county in 1891 was centered in the two towns; the greater number of court matters originated there; the circuit judge (Hon. William H. Simpson) resided in AuSable; and the majority of the members of the bar of the county lived in "the North end."

The records show that circuit court was held in the O'Toole Block, AuSable. The date of the last session was March 30, 1895. No reason is given for abandoning the practice of holding court there. However, the decline of the lumber industry probably had much to do with it. The J. E. Potts Lumber and Salt Company failed in 1891; the Tanner mill suspended operations the same year; the mills of Pack, Woods and Company, and those of Gratwick, Smith and Fryer closed down a few years later; and one-third of the population moved away.

## Items of Interest

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The story of the lumbering era grows in beauty as it fades in the darkness of the past. The AuSable River established the location of the typical lumbering towns of AuSable and Oscoda; the pine determined the course of their existence, and defined the limits of their history. The AuSable River was next to the Saginaw River in the volume of sawlogs it carried. But the silent forests were denuded of their pine—the work was done too well, as we of today can testify.

These paragraphs of interest have been gleaned from items appearing in the press of the county:

1883—A bill to incorporate AuSable and Oscoda into one village, was defeated in the State Legislature.

1874—The Loud firm was operating 10 lumber camps.

1872—The Lumbermen's Gazette, official publication of the lumber interests in Michigan, gave the number of men employed at AuSable-Oscoda in the lumber mills that year as 400.

1874—The Methodist Church at AuSable was completed at a cost of \$12,000.00.

1909—Congressman George A. Loud introduced the bill in Congress that provided for the establishment of a National Forest in Iosco county—now the Huron National Forest.

"All leather and whalebone"—the late Henry N. Loud's description of the lumberjack of the AuSable River region.

"The lion editor of the Huron shore," the sobriquet applied to W. M. Featherly, editor of The Lakeside Monitor of AuSable in the 1880's. It is said that every issue of this paper was good for a libel suit.

1891—The Loud Company ran seven log trains daily over the AuSable and Northwestern Railroad.

December 31, 1874—In two camps of Loud, Gay and Company, 12 men cut 1,951 logs; 16 men with four teams of horses and two yoke of oxen, skidded 1,950 logs. A. P. Buchanan was the foreman.

December 31, 1874—In a camp in which George A. Loud was the foreman, 16 men cut 2,262 logs; 14 men with four teams of horses and three yoke of oxen, skidded 2,232 logs.

1875—five logs—one 12-ft. log and four 16-ft. logs were taken from one giant pine tree. The number of feet, 5,835.

1875—The first attempt to bore for brine at Oscoda, was made in July, by Smith, Kelly and Dwight.

1875—The Catholic church at Oscoda was dedicated in August.

1870—The AuSable Caledonian Club was organized by the Scotch residents. The club flourished until 1875, holding a yearly contest of games and sports.

1868—The Republican party in Iosco county was organized by the Hon. H. M. Loud of AuSable and E. Laidlaw of Tawas.

1882—Potts' mill cut 96,000 pieces of lath, the largest cut on record.

1877—The Loud holdings were listed as: Owning and operating two saw mills, two salt blocks, dock, trams, line of tow barges, and standing pine.

In 30 years enough lumber was sawed at AuSable to build a board fence more than 20 times around the world.

Each lumbering firm had a distinctive mark on every log sawed at its mill. Here are a few descriptions: L enclosed in a circle, termed Circle L, for the Louds. H enclosed in a diamond, termed Diamond H, for Pack, Woods and Company. T, for Tanner. JEP, for Potts, who also used a crude pine tree mark. HE for Hi Emery. VC for Penoyar Bros. SPB, for Seth P. Bliss. Sage, for Russell Sage. The marks were registered in the office of the county clerk.

AuSable and Oscoda citizens who have served in the Michigan State Legislature:

**Representatives**

O. E. McCutcheon, two terms, 1879 to 1882.

George Orth, one term, 1891 to 1892.

Will MacGillivray, two terms, 1917 to 1920.

**Senators**

C. R. Henry, one term, 1885 to 1886.

C. A. Friedlander, one term, 1891 to 1892.

C. S. Pierce, one term, 1893 to 1894.

In the early 1880's, Laura Shippy, a child, was injured in a fall on a defective sidewalk in the village of AuSable. The fall permanently crippled her. She got a damage judgment against the village, and the village was forced to bond to pay the claim. The bond issue was unpaid at the time of the big fire in 1911—and the doom of AuSable was sealed, until the necromancy of a new industry dissipated the dreams of the past. The necromancer is Nature herself. The amulet is natural scenic beauty, pure water, and fresh untainted air. The industry is the tourist.



## The Wreck of the "Chriss Grover"

The shore line of Iosco county was the scene of several marine disasters in early days, but no accident was so far-reaching in its tragedy as the wreck of the "Chriss Grover," on Friday, April 16, 1880. The calamity was so tragic that it has become one of the historical tales of the AuSable-Oscoda community.

A terrible gale swept Lake Huron on that eventful Friday, and among the shipping craft that suffered was the three-masted schooner, the "Chriss Grover," loaded with stone. Disabled during the severe blow, the schooner was beached forty rods from shore, about a mile below AuSable; and so complete was the wreck, so broken up was the craft, that it was checked off as valueless.

Although stranded, the crew remained on the craft all night. Morning brought, not cessation of storm, but a hurricane of wind, and a snowstorm so dense, that it imperilled one's vision. Buffeted by the wind, billows of sea rising higher and higher, the oaken ribs of the schooner were crushed, while the crew awaited certain death unless help came from the shore.

To appreciate the heroism of the men who attempted to rescue the mariners, one must remember that there was no telephone service along the shore; and that telegraph lines were broken down by the storm at Alabaster, thus interrupting telegraphic service between AuSable and East Tawas.

But teams were dispatched to the Tawas life-saving station, to return with the lifeboat and crew, while brave men attempted a rescue by launching a row boat. They were soon flung back upon the sand. Undaunted, other crews manned the boat, in a desperate attempt at rescue, but they, too, were hurled back upon the land.

To stand idly by while seven men on the "Grover" were in such dire straits; to await arrival of the lifeboat from Tawas, which might not come until too late—such an act was unthinkable to the men of action in AuSable. The situation called for a determined use of every means that might effect a rescue.

The desperate scheme agreed upon was to shoot a lifeline to the men by throwing a missile with rope attached, over the boat, from the mouth of a small cannon—not over two feet long, an hundred pounds in weight, and two inches bore.

Five of the representative citizens of AuSable were foremost in the band of workers—J. W. Glennie, George A. Loud, J. C. Gram, Frank Fortier and Theo. S. Wilkin. Mr. Glennie discharged the cannon, and when the smoke had cleared away, the awful horror of a second accident, in addition to the shipwreck, was witnessed by the crowd. The gun had burst, and every man had been knocked down, and, for a moment, believed killed. Fortier and Wilkin were uninjured, however. Mr. Loud and Mr. Gram had been struck by the flying top log, and were injured about the knees. They were stunned and breathless, but soon recovered. Mr. Glennie's right hand was horribly torn and mutilated; his right leg was broken in a half-dozen places, and literally smashed. When told by Drs. Sutherland, Weir and Breden that amputation of both leg and arm was necessary, he sank rapidly, and within two hours had passed away.

At midnight, Capt. Chute and his crew arrived from Tawas, and these trained men in the lifeboat soon landed the vessel's crew safely.

A sorrowing citizenry laid John W. Glennie to rest. He was one of the pioneers of AuSable, and had resided there since 1867. He lies buried in the AuSable-Oscoda cemetery.

## The Big Fire of 1911

The tragedy that closed the lumbering era of AuSable and Oscoda, on July 11, 1911, excited the sympathy of all Michigan.

The story of the fire that rendered eighteen hundred people destitute and homeless and swept the two towns in ruins, was graphically related in the July 15, 1911, issue of the Iosco County Gazette. We quote generously from the account:

"With the exception of perhaps thirty residence buildings on what is known as 'Piety Hill' in Oscoda, the two towns of AuSable and Oscoda were totally destroyed by fire on Tuesday afternoon, entailing a loss of human life and property so great that it is simply appalling. Not only are all the ordinary residences of the town destroyed, but the beautiful dwellings of the Loud families, also their extensive mill properties, their cedar, lumber and slab yards, department stores—everything, were licked up by the flames and now lie a mass of smoking ruins and ashes; the estimated value of the aggregate property losses is \$2,000,000.00, half of which falls upon the Louds. The loss of life, at first reported to be a score or more persons, was very much exaggerated, as only four bodies have been found up to the present time, as follows:

Samuel Rosenthal, tailor, aged 54 years.

William Batt, porter at Elliott House.

Body of unidentified man.

Frank Clermont, an aged resident.

For two or three days prior to last Tuesday, forest fires had been smouldering near AuSable and Oscoda, and stealthily crawling nearer each hour, and crouching like a beast waiting for the opportune time to spring upon and devour its prey. The towns were

lying beautifully, peacefully, under the azure sky; the swaying verdure was searing under the heat of the mid-day sun, and the six hundred or more families of the doomed towns were apparently as tranquil as a slumbering child. A whisper of the lurking fires was heard, then a voice; but no fear was expressed or felt, as the distance between them and the overpowering element seemed so great. Surely no danger could befall the little ones who were frolicking and gamboling under Mother's watchful eye, or to the lad and maid who were enjoying the vacation time in profitable study or needed recuperation; and still not a thought of the awful calamity which would befall the two communities within the next few hours.

The noon whistles brought the artisan to the family board and the last meal with the home group in the old house where in most instances years of toil had builded little by little comfortable domiciles for wife and the growing family. At 1:00 the buzz of saws, the clanging of the artisan's tools, the click of typewriters, the furrowed countenances of office men, told that the afternoon's business was again under way—but not a thought that it was the last in the history of two towns that had been active and prominent in geographical history and commercial magnitude for about a half century.

But listen. The cooling zephyrs of the morning were now fierce winds, blowing from the direction of the suppressed combustion and charges with a heat surprisingly intense. 'If those fires should be stirred up a little by this rising wind it might be well to watch 'em,' some wiseacre remarked; and still but little alarm.

At 2:00 o'clock the fires were clambering over the hill ahead of the now stronger winds towards the towns; the people rushed into the streets as the fire alarm was turned in, and looking—turned and moaned with fear; the mills

closed, and the workmen started to fight back the forked flames that were now spreading in every direction; men thought of the dangers threatening their homes and the lives of their little ones and turned from other calls and hastened to protect them; fires were now breaking out like fireworks all over the towns, the fire department stood powerless to retard their progress, and the populace was at the mercy of the devouring flames. The cracking of the materials as they flew ablaze into the air and proved brands carrying ignition to other structures mingled with the moans and shrieks of women and children as they fled for their lives—many of them only half clad and taking not even time to bid farewell to the loved home with its furnishings and appointments, its relics, heirlooms, etc., all of inestimable value to themselves. A holocaust now prevailed.

Two hours later and the devastation was complete. The whole was a most desolate waste, Squads of people had taken refuge on small boats and sailed into Lake Huron, and a larger number had sailed northward on the steam freighter Congo, in order to escape to safety. Hundreds had fled to nearby swamps, many others found places of safety along the railroad tracks, and still others any place to get out of danger's way.

In the evening relief trains were sent up from East Tawas and refugees were taken aboard and brought to the Tawas; other trains followed, and fully six hundred were thus conveyed that night to East Tawas, and an hundred or two to Tawas City. Homes and hotels and public halls were thrown open, and soon all the escaped fire sufferers were well housed and fed. The next morning many more came down, and all were cared for, the number reaching near to if not quite the one thousand mark. Destitution was everywhere evident, a large percentage

of those here having nothing left aside from the clothing they wore.

The tales of escape from the flames, of children suffering as well as grown-ups, of losses of property and all possessions, of separation from family or friends, were pitiful and heart melting.

The total amount of the losses in the great fires is difficult to estimate, but will probably reach close to \$2,000,000.00. Among the more valuable properties destroyed were the saw mills, large quantities of lumber, AuSable and Northwestern Railway stock, the steamboat dock, storehouses, etc., and residences of Congressman George A. Loud, Henry N. Loud and E. F. Loud—whose losses will aggregate perhaps one-half of the amount above given; Philip Rosenthal, his fine residence, store building and stock of merchandise, also considerable real estate, all of the value of \$75,000.00 or more; R. A. Richards' home and stock of hardware, the Elliott House, V. E. Rix's large store, the post office, the printing office, etc.

As if a colony had suddenly been transported to the moon, so are the sufferers from the awful holocaust thrust out into a world new to them to seek sustenance first, then establish a new home, some of whom will be able to accomplish all this, others will do so in a measure, and still others who can never re-establish themselves because of age or other infirmities, or maybe lack of opportunities that will never come to them again as they once did. But, beside all this, where will be the greeting that for years they were wont to receive from neighbor or companion? Where those friendly faces that were an inspiration during all the years of toil, of struggle, of home-building, whose cheerful voices gave a new courage each day, and whose smiles were an incentive to better, happier, nobler living? Yes, 'tis true that former possessions will not be the only things missed by those who suf-

ferred material losses on that fateful day; the loss of old companionships will be even the greater trials to bear by hundreds of as kind-hearted people as were ever yoked together in the bonds of neighborly devotion to each

other, and loyalty to every interest of the community. Few of the ties there severed will ever be reunited.

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"Old friends of long ago, Scattered where the four winds blow."





The Lumbermen's Monument

## The Meaning of the Lumbermen's Memorial

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On the banks of the winding AuSable stands the Lumbermen's Memorial, with its giant figures depicting the timber cruiser, the sawyer, and the riverman. It is the work of Robert Aitken, a New York sculptor. Erected at a cost of approximately \$50,000.00, which was borne by the members of the lumbering families whose names appear on the base of the memorial, it was dedicated July 16, 1932. R. G. Schreck, who was U. S. Forest Supervisor, at the time, is credited with the idea of the erection of the monument.

What does the Lumbermen's Memorial mean? We who knew Michigan in the days when White Pine was king, make answer.

The memorial stands for Michigan in the days of her glory, when every blackened stump today, and many more besides them, was a towering pine tree, "green in summer, white in winter."

To us, it is a dream of dusky tribesmen braving the dangers of the forest, as they gathered pelts for the fur trader, or joined in the chase that was to provide food for the family; It is a dream of birchen canoes as bent figures paddle upstream against the swift current of the AuSable, and of the same craft, homeward bound, floating lightly on the water "like a yellow leaf in autumn, like a yellow water lily."

The monument symbolizes Michigan history—French voyageurs, traveling up and down the ancient highway of the waters; intrepid souls seeking pine holdings; the advent of the lumbermen; lumber camps with their motley crew—men fresh from Southern battlefields, whose sires and grandsires had fought for American freedom and independence; French-Canadians in their colorful mackinaws; Scots from Glengarry as clannish

as ever; fun-loving, irresistible Irishmen; thrifty and frugal Swedes and Finns—drawn together by the greatest human urge—work. And did they labor, did they play, did they fight?

To the limit of a man's strength was the length of their day. In the grey dawn they arose. Humble fare they ate, that made brawn and muscle. All day they labored. Snow often waist deep. Bitter cold. The ring of the axe in the winter air, as it cut through the bark of the pine; the whine of the saw as it ate its way through the heart of the tree; and the shrill cry of "timber-r-r-r," as the towering giant trembled for an instant, and then fell majestically.

Evening shadows. Supper of substantial food, set before men whose appetites had been sharpened by outdoor work. Then relaxation. Talk of the day's work. Rivalry between crews or camps. A rollicking song; mayhap a stag dance.

Hard-fisted men when they fought—which they might do at the drop of the hat. Colorful characters, like those in the days of the Old West, but with one exception—bare knuckles taking the place of guns.

The drive in the springtime. A race against time, always. Hazardous work, but a riverman from the AuSable was in a class by himself—preferred above all others.

The monument stands for the lumbering towns on the shore in summer days. The hum of the busy sawmill, like music, methinks. The fresh, pungent odor of the lumber, as pile after pile of it arose, and the mountain of sawdust increased in size. Night time, and a second shift took the place of the day laborers. The big burner—a dome of light; a signal that seemed to flash forth the message, "All is well."

And Saturday night! No tourist rush over a week-end holiday can compare with it. Friends and neighbors, not strangers, jostled each other, on the street, in the

stores. Greetings gay, as befitted the occasion.

Came the quiet of the Sabbath; and then following the whole scene was re-enacted day after day, season after season, for three decades or more. Little wonder that it became a part of life itself—and now, that these days can never come again, for the pine vanished “like the melting snows on the hillsides,” less wonder that we clothe the lumber epoch with romance, and ’neath half-shut eyes dream of “sighing pine trees, ages old, forming a vast cathedral aisle.”

The Lumbermen's Memorial on the AuSable stands for the “days that are gone; and the memory of the dead.” As we read the names chiseled in the enduring granite, some of the characters become real to us—the Louds, the Packs, T. F. Thompson—these men are a part of the history of our own Iosco. Their labors, together with that of the men who worked with them, made possible our development. And what is said of them might be recorded of the others memorialized, in other sections of Michigan and the Prairie States.





